

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6579

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9313

NODIS

FOR SISCO AND ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, EG, US, IS

SUBJECT:IMPLEMENTATION OF EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT

AGREEMENT: OIL FIELD TAKEOVER

REF: STATE 222715 (REPEATED GENEVA 7151)

1. IN CONNECTION WITH HAL SAUNDER'S EXCELLENT TELEGRAM FROM GENEVA, I SHOULD TELL YOU THAT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE EGYPTIAN SITUATION IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT. ONE OF MY EMBASSY OFFICERS HAS HAD TALKS WITH BOTH SPIELMAN OF MOBIL AND MUSTAFA AL AYUTI, WHO IS THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EGPC AND THE MAN DESIGNATED BY GOE TO COORDINATE SINAI OIL FIELD RECOVERY PLANS HERE IN CAIRO. THESE HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN CAIRO 9123 AND 9133 RESPECTIVELY. TO SUMMARIZE A FEW PERTINENT POINTS AS SEEN FROM HERE:

A. WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT AN EGYPTIAN TECHNICAL FORCE IS IN FACT STANDING BY READY TO GO BACK INTO SINAI. WE KNOW THAT FORMER TECHNICIANS WHO WORKED AT SINAI FIELDS ARE STILL BEING PAID BY MOBIL AND THE EGYPTIAN PETROLEUM COMPANY, BUT THERE IS NO RPT NO INDICATION THAT A TASK FORCE IS BEING ROUNDED UP TO MOVE IN AT THE PRECISE MOMENT WHEN THE ISRAELIS DEPART. AYUTI HAS TOLD DON SPIELMAN OF MOBIL THAT FOREIGN TECHNICANS WILL MAN THE FIELDS "UNTIL THE EGYPTIANS ARRIVE", WHENEVER THIS MIGHT BE. AT ONE POINT AYUTI MENTIONED THIS MIGHT BE AS LONG AS A MONTH.

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B. IN FOLLOWUP CONVERSATION WITH AYUTI SEPTEMBER 18, EMBOFF
ONCE AGAIN RECEIVED EARLIER COMPLAINT, I.E. HIS COMPLETE LACK OF
TECHNICAL INFORMATION UPON WHICH TO BASE INTELLIGENT PLANNING
DECISIONS. WE ARE SURE THAT EGYPTIANS HAVE NO RPT NO TECHNICAL
INFORMATION WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO DECIDE WHICH WELLS MIGHT
BE PERMANENTLY HARMED BY SHUTDOWN. INDEED OUR EGYPTIAN
TECHNICAL CONTACTS SEEM FULLY PREPARED FOR SOME SORT OF PARTIAL
OR TOTAL SHUTDOWN OF THE FIELDS WHETHER CAUSED BY ISRAELI
UNCOOPERATIVE MOVES OR EGYPTIAN INEPTITUDE IN ARRANGING FOR
TECHNICAL TAKEOVER OR DISPOSITION OF CRUDE OIL. THIS IS, OF COURSE,
NOT THE CONCEPT OF THE EGYPTIAN SENIOR POLITICAL LEVEL, WHO INSIST
THAT THE OPERATION MUST CONTINUE WITHOUT INTERRUPTION.
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EGYPTIAN POLITICAL/MILITARY LEVEL AND
TECHNICAL LEVEL IS POOR AND WE SUSPECT AYUTI IS
RELUCTANT TO GIVE GAMASY AND FAHMY THE FULL FACTS AS TO THIER
RELATIVE UNPREPAREDNESS.

C. EGYPTIAN TECHNICIANS ARE UNPREPARED FOR THIS PARTICULAR
MISSION AND DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE POLITICAL STAKES INVOLVED. THEY
ARE COUNTING ON AMERICANS AND ITALIANS SOMEHOW TO BAIL THEM OUT.
ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WHEN MY EMBASSY OFFICER HAS TALKED WITH
AYUTI, HE WAS CONDUCTING NORMAL MINISTRY BUSINESS AND AT ONE
POINT REPLIED TO A TELEPHONE CALL FROM MINPET HILAL THAT HE WAS
SURE MOBIL WAS WORKING OUT ALL NECESSARY DETAILS CONNECTED WITH
TAKEOVER OF RAS AL-SIDR, ASL AND MATARMA FIELDS. WE DO NOT
HAVE IMPRESSION, THEREFORE, THAT THERE IS ANY GREAT SENSE OF
URGENCY SURROUNDING EGYPTIAN PREPARATIONS AT LEAST NOT ON
TECHNICAL LEVEL.

2. SUGGEST DEPT PASS THIS MESSAGE TO GENEVA FOR SAUNDERS.
EILTS

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